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FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF FARM WORK COOPERATIVES
IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

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Decisions adopted at the Second Plenum of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party resulted in a considerable expansion of the socialized sector of agriculture in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The number of farm work cooperatives increased considerably in the last half of 1949 but at a lesser rate during the first months of 1950. There was neither any increase in the number of farm work cooperatives nor any substantial increase in their membership in the last half of 1950. The following table shows the development of farm work cooperatives in Bosnia-Herzegovina:

No of Farm Work Cooperatives in 1949						
15 Feb	30 Jun	30 Aug	31 Sep	30 Nov	31 Dec	
126	473	727	1,289	1,474	1,508	
Date	No of Farm Work Co-ops	Increase (%)	No of House-holds	Increase (%)	No of Land	Increase (%)
15 Feb	126	100	4,513	100	19,981	100
31 Dec	1,508	1,196	53,563	1,186	277,173	1,387

After this considerable increase in the number of farm work cooperatives and their membership was achieved, the efforts of the party organizations, especially following the Third Plenum, were directed toward the improvement of the political organization and the economic strengthening of the cooperatives. Throughout the first months of 1950, very few new cooperatives were established, but there was a large increase in membership, as shown below:

RESTRICTED

- 1 -

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<u>Oblast</u>	<u>No of Farm Work Cooperatives</u>		<u>No of Households</u>	
	<u>1 Jan</u>	<u>15 May</u>	<u>1 Jan</u>	<u>15 May</u>
Banja Luka	361	441	13,097	21,026
Tuzla	481	476	20,233	24,932
Mostar	430	387	15,050	17,947
Sarajevo	236	215	5,183	5,871
Total	1,508	1,519	53,563	69,776

The first problem is further to increase membership in farm work cooperatives and to determine the actual reasons why the membership did not increase during the past 5 to 6 months, even in the rich grain region cooperatives. The second problem is to determine what measures are to be taken now to strengthen further the economic organization of cooperatives and ascertain the causes of poor conditions in some of them.

One of the reasons why membership did not increase in 1950, especially in small and poor cooperatives, was that the economic position of members did not improve in comparison with private farmers and in some cases became even worse. Consequently, cooperatives could not attract a large number of farmers, especially middle farmers, who live and work near cooperatives. In more prosperous cooperatives, the daily wages paid in money and goods are very low due to the 1950 drought and undeveloped production. The very few cooperatives which oriented their production toward establishing vegetable gardens near large cities represented exceptions to this trend. These economic factors have retarded, and for some time will continue to retard, farmers from joining existing cooperatives or establishing new ones in the grain region. However, there are some new factors that show good prospects for the establishment of a large and strong socialized agricultural sector, which will not only be able to increase agricultural production but also raise the living standard of members of cooperatives.

For instance, during 1949 and 1950, 2,607 large structures were built on cooperatives in Bosnia-Herzegovina; in 1950, 285 tractors and a large number of other agricultural machines were given to cooperatives; and on some cooperatives, sheep, cattle, and pig farms were established. This proves that a certain number of cooperatives have created a sound basis for the further development and expansion of agricultural production, have shown the stability of large, socialized, agricultural enterprises, and have furnished an obvious example of methods to be used for the further development of rural areas.

The question arises as to whether, and to what extent, party organizations and local people's achievement authorities have participated in this work, whether the achievements of cooperatives have been properly utilized, and what has been planned for the further expansion of cooperatives and their membership.

In general, it can be said that local agencies have understood the problem of further expansion of cooperatives in a rather one-sided way. As early as March 1950, some srez administrations had already reported that they had discontinued accepting new members in order to concentrate on strengthening existing cooperatives. This policy was unjustified, because the number of applicants was very small, and in no case would their acceptance have jeopardized the work of strengthening the cooperatives. In a few -- but characteristic -- cases, the decisions of the Third Plenum were taken to mean that it was necessary to slow down the expansion of cooperatives in all areas, including the grain-producing section. In March 1950, farmers applying for membership in some srezes (Bos, Samac, Bijeljina) were turned down on the grounds that "political conditions are not yet ripe." Of course, in some cases, the farmers had applied for membership as speculators in crop purchase and to evade taxes, but no distinction was made between these and others with a sincere desire to join.

- 2 -

RESTRICTED
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Although the problem of organizational strengthening was and continues to be of primary importance, political propaganda activity aimed at the expansion of existing cooperatives should be kept in mind every moment. Tito has especially emphasized that local agencies should concentrate on explaining and persuading farmers of the advantages that cooperative life and production offer them and society in general.

Waiting for some organized campaign to establish farm work cooperatives has resulted in the following:

1. Neglect on the part of some basic party organizations within cooperatives to enlighten, persuade, and prepare farmers to apply for membership in cooperatives. Waiting has very often even led to loss of contact with private farmers, especially in cases where all the party members from a village were in a cooperative, except in official relationships such as crop purchase or other administrative measures.

2. Certain enemies of the people, assisted by various speculators, attempted and continued to attempt to break up some cooperatives by spreading rumors that cooperatives are set up for only 3-year periods, and since there is a drought, cooperatives are not needed. There were also cases in some brigades, or even cooperatives, where such elements attempted to take possession of the livestock of the cooperative, as in Bosanska Dravica, Dobo, Teslic, Foca, and Rogatica.

3. Decreased work efficiency in a number of cooperatives, especially after harvest and threshing periods to the extent that only 50 percent of the able-bodied members reported for work, and a decrease in interest in all cooperative activities; the drought became a justification for poor organizational strength and failure to complete other work in the cooperative.

In July, these deficiencies were noted in a number of the poor cooperatives, of which there are a few in each srez. Neither the srez agencies nor the political leadership paid sufficient attention to these problems while the agricultural commissions were not able to deal with all these situations in time but reacted from case to case and often solved them arbitrarily.

The lack of a live and constant political propaganda program has led to a series of other weaknesses affecting the morale and political dependability of members in a number of cooperatives.

Consequently, the conclusion may be drawn that a one-sided conception of the problem of further expansion of cooperatives has become an obstacle to their economic and organizational development; and that this problem cannot be solved by a campaign, carried out by leaps and bounds, but rather as a most important part of the daily political work in rural areas.

The grain area around Posavina and Semberija offers excellent conditions for the establishment of new cooperatives and expansion of existing ones. Conditions for expansion of cooperatives in the grain area are much better today than in 1949. Today, a large and prosperous agricultural cooperative is no longer a dream in this section but a reality well known to every farmer because it is prosperous despite the drought and all its initial weaknesses. Some cooperatives in this section have already made great strides in production; they have their own cooperative stables, they have given better yields and delivered more products to the state, they have cooperative livestock farms, they are planting orchards, and they are developing new groups of agricultural leaders. These are all powerful weapons which should be utilized and publicized in political work in the villages. In many srezes in the grain area, Bijeljina, Brcko, Bosanski Samac, Bosanski Brod, Bosanska Gradiska, Banjaluka, Prijedor, and other large srezes, there is already an

- 3 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

STAT

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extensive network of cooperatives which have all the economic conditions necessary for rapid expansion into still larger and more progressive agricultural cooperatives.

Expansion of such cooperatives will not only have a favorable effect on their organizational strengthening, but it will also increase their economic potential, create better conditions for crop rotation, increase their yield, increase livestock productiveness, and bring about a development of various production branches.

For two reasons, the bulk of political activity should be directed toward the further expansion of cooperatives in the grain-producing area. First, this area has a good number of cooperatives sufficiently well organized to absorb new households; and secondly, these cooperatives will be able to increase production and market surpluses very rapidly with less aid from the state.

Favorable conditions for further expansion also exist in some cooperatives in other areas. Their expansion, however, would not be justified unless it meant their economic strengthening. In such areas, the primary task is to enable the cooperatives to expand their activity to include other branches of agricultural production such as horticulture, vineyard cultivation, apiculture, etc.

This year's low production of agricultural and livestock products also had an adverse effect on the expansion and strengthening of the organizational structure of cooperatives. Poorly organized work and one-sided production, even in cooperatives that have been established for 2 to 3 years, such as the "27 Juli" Cooperative in Bosanski Novi, the "Borac" Cooperative in Banja Luka, and the "Bosko Siljegovic" Cooperative in Bosanski Dubica, resulted in a low number of actual days worked and low output per workday in free and tied dinars.

Internal weaknesses in work organization, aggravated by the drought and the inadequate political activity within the cooperatives, resulted in low morale in individual cooperatives. This in turn brought about more pronounced and quite understandable tendencies to concentrate more on work on private plots and work outside the cooperative, etc. Adequate organization and political measures were not taken to counteract these tendencies.

The most significant aspect of the entire problem, however, is the position the administrative authorities and party organizations take toward it and how it is understood in the field. For instance, certain local authorities consider a cooperative properly organized and managed even though its production has shown little or no progress. Such a conception is basically wrong and results in insufficient help being given to the administrative council and to the cooperative as a whole.

In most cases help given is sporadic, coming usually only when problems have reached the stage where they require immediate attention. The fault lies with the failure to make a basic economic and political analysis of a cooperative, and to draw on its experiences and apply them to other cooperatives in the same srez. When analyses are made, the general practice is to disregard economic indexes, such as the work system, production plan, the average number of days worked by each member, production costs, expenditure of financial resources, and use of materials. Consequently, presidents of cooperatives are summoned to the srez office (in Bosanska Dubica, for instance), as often as two or three times a week, to receive work directives. Such a practice is detrimental in two respects: (1) people are often unnecessarily taken off their normal jobs; and (2) what is worse, administrative councils of cooperatives do not receive any help in the solution of internal production problems. Quite generally, the regular

- 4 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

STAT

RESTRICTED

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practice now is to send officials of srez people' councils and especially srez commissions for agriculture from one cooperative to another to distribute srez directives, with no explanation as to how they are to be carried out, how they are to be interpreted, and by whom, whether by the administrative council, by cooperative consultation, or by the president and brigadiers.

As a rule, such a method leads to inaction on the part of administrative councils and less democracy, as it prevents members from extensive participation in solving problems of the cooperative. The tendency is becoming more and more pronounced for brigadiers of cooperatives to assume the role of supervisors, lose their influence among members, and become individuals who do the least amount of actual work in the cooperative and do not accept valuable suggestions from members. Brigadiers in some cooperatives have become bad examples in the cooperative and obstacles to its progress.

The internal organization and administration of a cooperative is not at all simple, for it requires a knowledge of all the regulations and their application to the life of the cooperative, as well as the uncovering of new phenomena in the life of the cooperative. The mutuality of interests between cooperatives and private farmers requires daily political indoctrination and raising of the level of consciousness of cooperative work.

The functioning of the administrative council and the cooperative as a whole depends primarily on the work of basic party organizations in the cooperative and the work of every Communist in the organization. In some cases, the party organizations do not occupy themselves with production problems, do not assist administrative councils in developing and strengthening diversified branches of production activity, and do not take sufficient account of how party members are distributed in production or of the average number of days they work. If this were done, such cases would not happen where only ten of 53 party members in a cooperative worked in actual production, while all the others were in other, often quite secondary, activities. There are even some cases where the secretaries of the basic organizations in the cooperative showed the lowest average number of days worked. It is quite obvious that such party members have little influence among members of cooperatives in either getting them to do their work or in mediating relations in the cooperative. Communist leadership in an economic organization such as a cooperative consists of the direct participation of Communists in production and administration, and their constant and systematic, rather than sporadic, participation through the administrative council in the solution of all economic problems.

Consequently, the problem of the organizational and political strengthening of cooperatives cannot be regarded independently of the economic development of their main and auxiliary production branches or of those elements which make the cooperative a socialist establishment, a lever for a socialist transformation of villages, and the improvement and development of agricultural production in general.

As a rule, cooperatives did not increase their crop yields this year. Livestock productiveness was considerably lower than that of livestock owned by private farmers. The exceptions to this were some well-established cooperatives which introduced basic technical methods and increased their crop yields accordingly. However, in comparison with 1949, when the trend was for local authorities to reduce compulsory deliveries from cooperatives as much as possible to create favorable conditions for their expansion in 1950, this year's deliveries of white grains by cooperatives are considerably larger than even those of private farmers. This year, deliveries of white grains by cooperatives are 21 percent of the total of white grain deliveries, although cooperative arable land is only 20 percent of the total arable land.

- 5 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

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Meat deliveries of cooperatives are considerably lower, although no detailed information is yet available. Cooperatives have 54,033 head of cattle and 218,298 sheep, while private holdings have 70,426 head of cattle and 129,289 sheep. It is obvious that the number of cattle in cooperatives is much too small, compared with the number in private holdings.

Since cooperatives, despite the drought, delivered relatively more grain this year than private farmers (this applies only to the grain-producing region), they can participate relatively quickly in larger grain deliveries to the state. This example can serve in developing further the proper relationship of cooperatives to the state, the organizational setup, and the strengthening of cooperatives.

The disproportionate ratio of livestock in private holdings indicates that the livestock in cooperatives is not increasing rapidly enough, and that this does not always depend solely on existing livestock but on sources for increasing livestock. Instructions issued by the federal government on how to increase livestock are not usually understood either by the administrative councils or by the party organizations in the cooperative. Administrative councils and some state authorities try to solve this problem by buying additional livestock abroad but fail to see the natural sources which exist in private holdings.

So that members of cooperatives might bring young livestock from their private holdings into the cooperatives, more constant political and educational activity is necessary because in their first years and especially this year cooperatives did not have sufficient financial means to buy cattle at existing high prices, at least not in large numbers. One of the immediate tasks of administrative councils, state authorities, and party organizations is to work to increase the number of all types of livestock and for the preservation of breeding stock.

Noncompliance with policy rules, especially in the distribution of income, always creates dissatisfaction. This year, many cooperatives primarily the poor ones, distributed advance payments of 60 to 70 percent, justifying these payments on the often small yields. Such distribution regularly resulted in a decrease in work discipline, so that some members left work without the knowledge of the administrative council. There were even some cases in which certain capitalistically and speculatively inclined members of administrative councils in Sarajevo, Doboj, and Tesanj srezes credited themselves and their relatives with a large number of extra workdays. There were also some cases in which presidents of cooperatives (Travnik Srez) retained private holdings as large as 4 hectares, justifying them as various alleged inheritances. The work discipline in such cooperatives steadily decreased; the tendencies of some vacillating members to work more on their private holdings increased, etc. In several instances some unscrupulous administrative councils, influenced by capitalistically and speculatively inclined elements, expelled a large number of members under the pretext of strengthening the cooperative and issued illegal regulations to return their original land and inventory to the discharged members (as happened in Bosanski Brod Srez, where 47 members were discharged). There was also a tendency in some cooperatives to expel poor members.

The foundation of political and organizational work in every cooperative consists in resolving its internal political problems which are quite normal for every cooperative because members are yesterday's private farmers who had their individual class interests. It also consists of constantly struggling to increase the property of the cooperative and settling internal relations.

RESTRICTED

- 6 -

RESTRICTED

STAT

RESTRICTED

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The activity of party organizations, administrative councils, and srez administrative authorities should be directed toward concrete and vital assignments such as the completion of a capital construction plan, preservation of livestock and economical utilization of fodder, exceeding the fall sowing plan, deep winter plowing, preparation of land for orchards and vineyards, and organization of bookkeeping by the end of 1950.

Over 400,000 young fruit trees in state nurseries for farm work cooperatives and 4,000 hectares of new cooperative orchards are to be planted in 1951 and 1952. To realize this task not only the work and complete mobilization of farm work cooperatives is needed, but propaganda agencies should utilize this drive for the expansion and development of cooperatives.

This year, construction was started on over 2,320 projects for cooperatives, some of which have been completed. Failure to complete these projects will not only be economically detrimental, but will affect the workload of members, thus creating economic and political problems in the cooperative.

The tasks which face cooperatives require all-round and constant help from state authorities and srez party administrators. Failure to see the internal problems of a cooperative, superficially inspecting a cooperative when visiting it, or explaining questions inadequately because of insufficient familiarity with prevailing regulations and the party line results in problems being left for solution to cooperatives and their administrative councils. These they cannot always solve properly.

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RESTRICTED

- 7 -

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